

## TSARIST RUSSIA

- Russia covered one-sixth of the world's land surface, was unprotected by natural boundaries, had a poor climate, poor communications, as well as extensive ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity held together by force.

- The great movements in Europe – the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution—had barely touched Russia.
- All of these things made Russia a backwards country; however, the fact that their rulers intermarried with those of Europe gave them some claim to being part of Europe.



## TSARIST RUSSIA

- Crimean War exposes Russia's weakness
  - Economically backward
  - Technologically behind
- Tsar Alexander II decides to abolish serfdom in 1861 "better to abolish serfdom from above than to wait until it begins to abolish itself from below"
  - But freed serfs had to pay back the landlords and fell into debt
  - Some reforms made in the government but no fundamental changes in limiting Tsar's power
  - Tsar Alexander made some reforms in 1864, but he was unable to control the forces unleashed by his reform program. Reformers want more and rapid change. So he was assassinated in 1881

## ALEXANDER II



- The newly found freedoms and spirit provided the right environment for a number of revolutionary groups to grow, including the nihilists and the populists.
- The most dangerous revolutionaries proved to be a group called the "Will of the People" which believed that terrorist acts and assassinations of top government officials was the swiftest way for them to change society and overthrow the government.

## Tsarist Russia: Alexander III (1881-94)



- In reaction, Alexander III sought to his father's reform
- He and Nicholas I perfected the police state.
- He forced industrialization on Russia, including the building of the Trans-Siberian Railroad in 1891.
- Forced industrialization, however, created a discontented working class.

## New Nations and Democracy in Europe in 1800s

The people of Belgium gained their independence from the Dutch in 1830 and established a constitutional monarchy under Leopold I.

Norway and Sweden were united under one monarchy for most of the 1800s until Norway broke the union in 1905.

In 1907 it became the first sovereign state to give the vote to women. Sweden followed their example in 1909.

The Netherlands progressed toward democracy with their first constitution in 1849.

Switzerland used the principle of direct democracy in their 1874 constitution.

Denmark gained significant democratic reforms in the early 1900s.

Spain and Portugal, unlike the rest of the nations of western Europe, made little progress toward democracy.



## CONCLUSION

- Nationalism explodes throughout Europe in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century
- Italy and Germany unified not democratically but through diplomacy, warfare, and conservative politics
- Older European states forced to adapt to changes